

## Monsters

by Little Red Hood

Category: Halloween  
Genre: Humor, Supernatural  
Language: English  
Status: Completed  
Published: 2011-10-31 20:09:51  
Updated: 2011-10-31 20:09:51  
Packaged: 2016-04-26 22:25:40  
Rating: T  
Chapters: 1  
Words: 5,068  
Publisher: [www.fanfiction.net](http://www.fanfiction.net)  
Summary: Michael Myers isn't the only boogeyman that comes out on Halloween.

## Monsters

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**\*\*Rated:\*\* T**

**\*\*Disclaimer:\*\*** I don't own the characters of Michael Myers or Jamie Lloyd. The monster I made up owns himself.

**\*\*Author's Note:\*\*** I got the idea for this fic from Voltaire's song "Goodnight Demon Slayer." It takes place more or less in the same kind of universe as "What He Wants" but I deemed it a little too wacky to be included in the actual storyline. So, friends and neighbors, we have ourselves a standalone. I hope you like it.

**\*\*Monsters\*\***

\_A long, long time ago, it was a night of great power. When the days grew short, the spirits of the dead returned to their homes to warm themselves by the fire's side. All across the land, huge bonfires were lit. Ohhh, there was a marvelous celebration. People danced, and they played games, and they dressed up in costumes, hoping to ward off the evil spirits. Especially the boogeyman.\_

**\*\*Mrs. Blankenship, "The Curse of Michael Myers"\*\***

**\*\*[O]\*\***

There are many kinds of monsters.

Most are human, though people seldom like to admit it. Human beings who cause misery and pain, who pursue their own selfish goals without

a thought for anyone they might hurt, those monsters are sadly more numerous than any other breed. Others are the products of myths and legends. Majestic dragons, fallen angels, and enormous giants that swallow men whole, these are pit against mighty heroes so that the latter will be able to prove their courage and honor - or insufferable arrogance, as the case may be. And still others are brewed in the potent cauldron of childhood imagination, then sent out into the world to find closets to creep into and beds to lurk under. These monsters tend to have short lives, as the elixir of childish fantasy tends to dry up with age. But as long as the well runs deep, a child's dreaming mind will invest every shadowy corner with a goblin, every dusty attic with a ghost, every bedroom with a Boogeyman.

The being known as The Shape prided himself on defying classification. He was human, or at least he inhabited a human body. Yet in spite of his humanity he tended to leave a trail of blood, fear, and grief wherever he went. Every time people thought they'd seen the last of him, he returned to haunt them again, like the recurring memory of a nightmare. His name inspires such terror that the people of his hometown have granted him the status of a legend, a dark, mysterious villain that prowled through the forests and stalked beautiful young women. And whenever little Haddonfield children thought of the Boogeyman, they always thought of him.

Almost always, Michael amended.

"Please, Uncle?" The shrill voice of his eight-year old niece pleaded with him from where she lay in bed with the covers pulled up almost to her nose. He'd discovered the girl a year ago when he'd emerged from a coma ready to kill his younger sister, only to then learn that she'd died all on her own. The news of his sibling's demise filled him with sadness, an unusual emotion which he figured must arise from being robbed of the pleasure of finishing Laurie himself. Upon hearing of Laurie's daughter, he'd then committed himself to tracking her down, believing her death would make an acceptable substitute for Laurie's. But when he'd finally had the little girl cornered and helpless, he...simply couldn't do what he'd come to do. It had been a curious experience, showing mercy. It had moved him to do the unthinkable. Instead of destroying her, he'd brought her to live with him in his childhood home.

"Please?" She was flat-out begging him now. Her brown eyes were wide and genuinely frightened.

It was now exactly one year since that fateful Halloween, and his relationship with her had improved. She no longer cringed at his approach; no longer trembled when he tried to hold her. Now she actively sought him out whenever she felt lonely or afraid. Being viewed as a protector was an interesting change - and not unwelcome, since, much to his surprise, he felt deep affection for the girl - but it was mildly irritating at times.

Michael stared at his niece, who stared back at him with such desperation that he knew he'd already lost this fight. Heaving an exasperated sigh, he rose from the rocking chair he'd been sitting in.

He supposed this was his own damn fault. Jamie was young and naive; what else could he expect after the traumatic night he'd made her

endure? Granted, he'd assumed at the time that she was tough enough to shrug off such trivial things. Didn't she carry some of his blood in her veins?

Going over to the closet, Michael wrenched the doors aside, then stepped back to let Jamie see the dingy interior. There were a few clothes dangling on hangers, a pile of pillows and blankets on the floor, and some old board games tucked up on the shelves. It was a perfectly normal, perfectly boring closet.

After that night - a night that had dragged on for so long due to Jamie's inability to sleep that he'd nodded off before she had, waking up only to find her still wide-awake from fright the next morning - he'd made a firm resolution never to let his little niece watch any horror movie marathons before bedtime ever again.

"C-could you check under the bed, too?"

\_Oh, for the love of...! \_Michael considered rebelling at this, but once again found himself complying with the little girl's wishes, resigned to the silliness of it all.

He'd tried to repair the damage, tried to tell her that these things weren't real, tried to show her - in the gentlest way possible - that he was exponentially more dangerous than the toothiest, slimiest beast to ever take shape in the pit of her blackest nightmares, but it was no use. \_She's too much like her mother,\_ he thought glumly. \_Paralyzed by her own fear. \_

Leaving the closet door ajar, he came over to Jamie's bed and bent down on one knee. Feeling utterly stupid, he stuck a hand underneath the metal bedframe and groped around in search of the monster he knew he wouldn't find, then crouched even lower to peer into the darkened space, suppressing a sneeze or two when he discovered that the only real terror down there was the vast collection of dust bunnies accumulated over the years.

Rising to his feet, he nodded to Jamie, indicating that everything had passed inspection. Her eyes still darted to all corners of the room, and Michael began silently praying to any gods that would take pity on a murderer for the child to grow a backbone and just go to sleep already!

After a few more minutes of watchfulness, his niece's eyelids began to grow heavy. "Thanks, Uncle." She gave him a smile even as she struggled to stay awake, which made her look so adorable it reminded him why he hadn't killed her when he'd had the chance. He watched as Jamie snuggled into her pillow and, sighing, gave in to the paternal instinct - an instinct that he hadn't even been aware of possessing before he'd met her - and began stroking the little girl's hair as she drowsed.

Her eyes suddenly flew open wide. "What about the night light?"

Moving away from her bedside, Michael headed over to a small folding table that'd been hastily wedged between a pair of bookshelves. Once there, he scooped up a box of matches that lay next to "the night light." The match singed his fingertips as he grabbed the stem of a pumpkin with his free hand and pulled. The top half of the pumpkin

came away after a few tugs - it was wedged in there tight! - then he reached down inside to light the candle. A burst of orange light ignited from the triangular eyes and grinning mouth of the jack-o-lantern he'd helped Jamie make, and he spent a few seconds reflecting proudly on his skills with a blade, flawlessly perfect whether he was carving a pumpkin or carving a human. This particular pumpkin, large enough to provide filling for an entire pumpkin pie, had also cost him quite a bit of effort to obtain. He'd received a bite from a nasty dog during a midnight raid on the town's heavily guarded pumpkin patch to steal it, but seeing the delighted look on Jamie's face when he'd presented it to her convinced him the trouble had been worth it.

Upon turning back to Jamie, he saw that her eyes were almost shut. "Goodnight, Uncle," she muttered sleepily. "Will you stay for a little while?"

He assured her he would, and watched as sleep claimed her at last.

Life was so much simpler when all I did was kill people, he thought, heaving a weary sigh as he settled into his favorite rocking chair. He gazed at the sleeping form of Jamie as he began to rock back and forth, allowing himself be soothed by the chair's steady creaking. The light from the jack-o-lantern flickered along the walls and ceiling, painting the room in a orange-red glow. A branch scratched at a window as it was shaken by the rising wind. Michael felt his body relax as the day's tension left him.

...and then he woke up. At first, he was confused as to where he was, then after taking a look around spotted the lighted jack-o-lantern, which subsequently called forth a memory of putting his niece to bed earlier. He was still in the rocking chair by Jamie's bed, and a quick glance at her motionless form laying face-up in the rumpled bedsheets confirmed she was still asleep. A full moon shone through the curtains of her window, casting silvery highlights on her hair and face that were just barely visible against the red-gold jack-o-lantern light playing over her skin. She'd folded her hands on her chest sometime during the night, an adjustment that made the little girl resemble a pale, eternally peaceful corpse.

Disturbed, Michael felt a chill flow in a thin, icy stream down his spine, raising goosebumps as it went. His eyes began scanning the room just as Jamie had done earlier, noting the location of every spot where the jack-o-lantern's light didn't reach. Maybe it was just a side-effect of having woken up suddenly, but every instinct in The Shape's body told him something wasn't right.

Then the candle inside the jack-o-lantern sputtered out.

Still in the rocking chair - but with all his senses on full alert - Michael made a minute shift in position and dipped his hand into the pocket of his jumpsuit, taking hold the handle of his knife. Whether it was from lack of heat or something else, the bedroom had grown much colder. He could see his breath condensing into white puffs as he exhaled. The moon's feeble rays now served as the only source of light.

Then he heard it: a sloppy sound, composed of wet gurgles, splutters, and splurts. Then there was crunching, and with a start Michael

recognized it as...someone chewing.

He listened closely for the source of the sound and quickly found it. It was coming from the jack-o-lantern.

Michael stared as the top of the carved pumpkin started to bulge, swelling like an infected wound. More squishing and squelching issued from within it, then the entire top half of the pumpkin split open like an exploded pustule. Moist pumpkin fragments and bits of pulp splattered against the walls, and Michael, who was no longer sure if he was awake or dreaming, saw a black hand emerge and extend fingers tipped with wicked-looking claws.

The creature inside the pumpkin revealed itself one alarming inch at a time as it crawled out. Squinting through the moonlight, Michael caught glimpses of something that seemed to be nothing but legs and arms. Then he saw that in the center of its flailing limbs it did have a body, which appeared to be just a ball covered in stiff hair. A memory flashed through Michael's mind of when he'd been very small and had often sat on the front porch of his house. His mom and dad, noting their son's intense stares and silences on these occasions, simply assumed that he was daydreaming, but when they weren't looking he would catch small insects and torture them slowly. Sometimes he'd catch butterflies, a few times he caught grasshoppers, but his favorite victims had been the daddy longlegs that made their nests under the porch steps. He'd liked to torment them by tearing their legs off, a piece at a time, until there was nothing left but the tiny body, which he would squash only after so much time had passed that he imagined the little thing must be begging for death. Whatever monstrosity was being born from the pumpkin reminded him of those miserable daddy longlegs.

Having almost completely extricated itself, the thing suddenly seemed to get stuck. It began pulling furiously on its right hind leg, which came free on the third try, sending the creature toppling head-first onto the edge of the table. It lay there for a few seconds, its four gangly limbs splayed and twitching, then rose again. A pair of eyes mounted in what he assumed to be its head opened, and Michael found himself wishing he could exchange his own black eyes for those menacing blood-red ones. There were no whites in them, none whatsoever.

Michael remained motionless, breathing slow with his head tilted to one side out of an intuition that the monster wouldn't bother him if it thought him asleep. But he kept his eyes open because he knew evil when he saw it, and this little freakshow was made of it.

The black pupils in the center of its eyes contracted into slits when they fell upon Jamie. Michael tightened his grip on the knife as the creature's wide mouth split into a grin that put its daggerlike teeth on full, gleaming display. Like a frog, it leapt off the table onto the foot of Jamie's bed.

Michael continued holding his breath as it crawled over the length of her body until it came to a halt upon her chest. Jamie didn't so much as twitch as the little monster crouched there on all fours, then its eyes flashed bright crimson as it leaned closer to the child's face with its lips parted as though about to whisper a secret in her ear. There was a rasping sound as it sucked breath into the black hole of its mouth, and Michael saw thin, pearly-white tendrils of vapor leave

Jamie's mouth and flow into the monster's. At first the white substance resisted the creature's pull, prompting it to suck harder. Jamie began to cry and twitch in her sleep.

Enough is enough, Michael thought as he shot out of the chair, drawing his knife along the way. Whatever sick thing this abomination was doing was hurting his niece. He didn't know if he could kill it, but he was sure as hell going to try.

A few quick steps brought him to Jamie's bed. The knife was raised and coming down when the monster noticed him. It hissed and bounded off the girl's chest like a startled cat, leaving a few small wisps of light floating like severed spiderwebs in the air above her mouth. Only excellent reflexes enabled Michael to check the knife's descent before he stabbed his own niece in the chest.

With a gasp, Jamie inhaled the bits of drifting essence back into herself, then opened her eyes while crying in little, hoarse sobs. "I had a scary dream," she moaned. "There was a monster and it - "

He slapped his free hand over her mouth and shook his head, meaning for her to be quiet. Skittering claws could be heard racing over the floorboards. The room was still mostly dark except for a few beams of moonlight - which threatened to be snuffed out any moment by oncoming clouds - and Michael cursed himself for losing sight of the monster when it'd jumped away from the bed. He strained all his senses to pick up any trace of it. Taking his hand off Jamie's mouth, he dropped down to his knees and lifted up the hem of the blanket to peer under the bed again, suffering an acute jolt of déjà-vou as he did so. Only this time the danger was real.

He heard more skittering in the darkness, except it came from behind him. Something light and hairy slithered over his right calf. Jamie whimpered in fright.

Standing up quickly, he turned his head from side to side, scanning the room. Everything looked perfectly normal and undisturbed.

He took a step, and heard something beneath his foot squeak. Looking down, he saw it was a stuffed monkey, one of several dolls that Jamie insisted on keeping. He picked it up and carried it over to the shelf where the rest of her collection was lined up in a row, their glass eyes devoid of emotion yet constantly staring.

There was the pink unicorn with the ribbon in its mane, beside it perched a rainbow-hued parrot wearing a lopsided pirate hat, and next to it was -

Red eyes flashed with incandescent brightness right in front of him just as all moonlight in the room was obscured by passing clouds. Something hurtled into him and he felt claws rake across his chest as he was knocked to the floor. In the darkness, Jamie screamed.

Michael lay with his back pressed against the cold, wooden floor, searing pain exploding in steady throbs from his torn chest, while hoarse, wheezing laughter issued from a spot near his left shoulder. Turning his head, he caught of glimpse of evil eyes bounding away from him toward the bedroom door.

Humiliated and angry with himself for being caught off guard, it was a very furious Shape that stalked out into the hallway after it. Out here were several of the Halloween decorations he'd hung up throughout his house. For a second, he stood in profile before a glow-in-the-dark poster of a skull mounted on the door leading into Judith's old room, then he lunged for the staircase, catching sight of his quarry scrambling like a demonic monkey along the banister, its body stained sickly green by a string of witchlights wrapped around the railing.

The monster had the advantage of a headstart, and was gone by the time he reached the stairs. He started down...and promptly had his left ankle seized and jerked to one side, sending him bouncing painfully down each step until he struck the ground floor like a human-shaped bowling ball. More laughter came from under the stairs, then the familiar scratch of claws on wood as it ran.

For a moment he just lay there. Some distant part of his brain registered the onset of several different kinds of pain emanating from various injuries received during the fall, but that was less important than the part of his brain screaming for him to get up, find the entity responsible for this, and annihilate it so thoroughly that a black hole formed in the area of space that its body once occupied. Forget a quick, clean death by stabbing; this thing was going to suffer. Painfully, and for quite a lengthy amount of time.

From the kitchen came the sharp sound of glass breaking. He rose to his feet with all the grace of an irate zombie and stalked through the halls until he came to the small kitchen, an area of the house that he seldom visited since he couldn't cook and neither could Jamie. The most he could as far as food preparation went was to fix Jamie an occasional bowl of cereal. His boots clicked menacingly on the white tiles, then stopped as he took in the devastation around him. Above the sink was a row of cabinets with their wooden doors dangling off their hinges, and smashed on the floor below them was the remains of his mother's china set. It lay in glittering shards, antique crystal wine glasses, tumblers, punchbowls, and serving dishes that now looked as though they'd been used in an afternoon tea party with The Three Stooges. The china set had been the only thing left to him that belonged to his mother, and its loss left him feeling as though she'd died a second time.

Glass fragments crunched beneath his heels as he walked through the destruction, heading for the sink. He had a feeling - a very strong feeling - that his prey was still here somewhere, hiding.

He threw open the cabinets below the sink, but found nothing except water pipes and dirt. The oven was also empty, along with the refrigerator, and the unplugged microwave that hadn't been cleaned out since the sixties held nothing but a mine of congealed grease.

Then from a row of cabinets off to his right came the sound of vigorous chewing.

He threw open the cabinet door to find the little monster with one of its sphindly arms down inside a box of Cheerios. Its jaws stopped working in mid-chew and uttered a low growl that sounded suspiciously like \_Uh-oh\_.

The cereal box fell from its claws as Michael hauled it out by one of its spider legs. He threw it up against a wall and held it there with his left hand as it madly squirmed, trying to bite but unable to bring its mouth close enough. It brought its hind legs up, preparing to kick its attacker, but Michael twisted so that its claws swiped empty air. When it realized it couldn't escape, the monster went limp, settling into a resigned silence, and Michael heard it gulp as he raised his knife. Wishing to savor the moment, Michael held the blade in position just over the creature's heart - or where he thought its heart should be, anyway. One more second and he would plunge it into fur-covered flesh and then twist the hilt to make a deeper cut and...

and he was stumbling back, his eyes covered by the green slimeball that had come flying out of the monster's mouth so quickly he hadn't had time to dodge. The knife dropped from his hand as he crashed to the floor, his hands landing painfully among jagged pieces of glass. Raucous laughter could be heard throughout the halls as the monster fled away from him.

This...is not...FAIR! Michael thought as he stood up, ignoring the sting of glass cutting into his palms, and groped his way to the sink. Whatever was in his eyes was sticky as glue and threatened to weld his eyelashes to his corneas. While he splashed cold water into his eyes, he vowed that if Fate was real, he would hunt it down and murder it for putting him through this night.

A high-pitched human scream came from upstairs as Michael scrubbed away the last bit of gunk. \_Jamie!\_ Retrieving his knife, he moved as quickly as his aching, beat up body allowed him to up the stairs.

There was no sign of the girl when he entered her room. Panic started to rise in his chest when he heard a soft whimper coming from the closet. He threw open the doors to find the little girl on the floor curled into a shaking ball. He picked her up and she sobbed as she wrapped her arms around his neck.

"It was here!" she gasped, clinging tighter to his neck. "It left me alone and went into Aunt Judith's room!"

Judith's room. Shit.

He hated going in there. Memories, both good and bad, were in that room and if there was anything life had managed to teach Michael Myers it was that the past - especially his past - was better left alone.

\_This is what it wants,\_ he realized. \_It wants me to be afraid. It's just as much a Boogeyman as I am. \_

Michael hissed, and if his eyes had been able to glow from the heat of his rage, they would've done so then. Without stopping to think, he set Jamie down and marched purposefully in the direction of Judith's room. Upon arrival, he could see where a huge hole had been gnawed clean through the wooden frame and that the skull poster once covering it had been ripped to shreds. Nothing was visible through the hole except darkness.



The ruined door swung open easily. Everything was silent and dark. Michael knew without needing to see that in the center of the room, forever staining the wooden floor, were several spatters of red. He guessed that his parents just hadn't been able to bear cleaning up the mess after Judith's body was taken away, and so the blood had set in as a grisly monument to his first and greatest kill.

Bits of cobweb settled on the backs of his hands as he slowly stalked through the room, the floorboards creaking beneath his boots. He wanted to strike out at something, but so far nothing presented itself as a target. Then, with such speed it cut through his normal indifference to the cold, he felt the temperature in the room drop.

"Come to kill me again, Michael?"

The world stopped. His whole body went as stiff and rigid as a chopping block.

His older sister stepped out of the shadows before him. She was naked, and still covered in blood from the seventeen stab wounds he'd given her. She held her hands out to him, as though expecting a hug. "Mom and Dad will be so mad at you."

Her voice was low, hypnotic. It dripped into his ears and into his brain like wax, robbing him of the ability to think or move. Her pale skin gleamed as she approached him with her arms outstretched. Clots of dried blood were matted into her blonde hair; loose strings of it fell down in front of her eyes, which were sunken in and ringed by darkness. Some distant part of his awareness knew he should raise his knife and use it, but for some reason it wasn't in his hand anymore. Must've slipped out of his hand when he'd lost contact with his fingers. There was time enough for him to gaze into his sister's dead, soulless black eyes before she took him to the ground, straddled him, and clamped her hands around his windpipe.

Even though he'd done it to several of his victims, Michael had never really given much thought to what it felt like to be strangled. He was learning now that it was not pleasant. Spots were beginning to dance before his eyes, his temples throbbed, his heart was a thumping, flaming ball of pain inside him. He knew he should try to push Judith off him, but his arms felt leaden, paralyzed. Unable to move or breathe or think, Michael felt consciousness slipping away and couldn't do a damn thing about it. He was going to die.

"Leave him alone!"

And then Judith's hands were torn away from his neck as she screamed. Releasing him, she scurried backwards like a spider, and Michael saw the skin of her face begin to peel and melt, running in waxy rivulets down her chin. The shape of her body changed as well, contorting and shrinking into a much smaller form. Soon Judith was gone, and in her place crouched the hellspawned vermin Michael had been chasing all night.

And he was pleased beyond all reckoning to see the handle of his knife protruding from its hairy back.

He watched, elated, as Jamie deftly avoided the monster's slashing claws and wrenched the knife out of the creature's back. Black blood

dripped from the tip of the blade as she raised it, bringing it down in a powerful arc that cut neatly through the creature's right foreleg even as its claws missed her by centimeters.

Howling in pain, the monster scurried through the open bedroom door. After helping him to his feet, Jamie returned Michael's knife. Both of them stalked out into the hallway, grim-faced and prepared to end things, when a horrible shriek came from downstairs.

"AHHHHHHH!"

Michael and Jamie descended the stairs and followed the screams until they came upon Dr. Sam Loomis, who was standing outside the front door with the monster persistently clinging to his right pantsleg. Loomis was hopping from foot to foot, trying to shake the creature off, while screaming incoherent curses at the top of his lungs. When he finally dislodged his attacker, he whipped his revolver out of the pocket of his trenchcoat and fired six times into the monster's hairy body, until it was reduced to a quivering puddle of goo at his feet.

After the smoke cleared, Michael approached the old man. Wild-eyed, breathing heavily, and with the remains of a mashed cigarette between his teeth, Loomis asked in a tremulous voice.

"Was that the Boogeyman?"

Michael gave his former psychiatrist a long, cold look, then slammed the door in his startled face.

He turned around, and saw his niece, whose nightgown and hair were spattered in demon gore and who still clutched the monster's severed leg in her fist like a trophy of war. He felt his heart of stone swell with an emotion he immediately recognized as pride.

Maybe she wasn't so much like her mother after all.

\*\*[O]\*\*

End  
file.